Jim Henson's™
THE STORYTELLER™
Tale Two of Four
Fairies
ARCHAIA™
BENJAMIN SCHIPPER

# Faerie Hill

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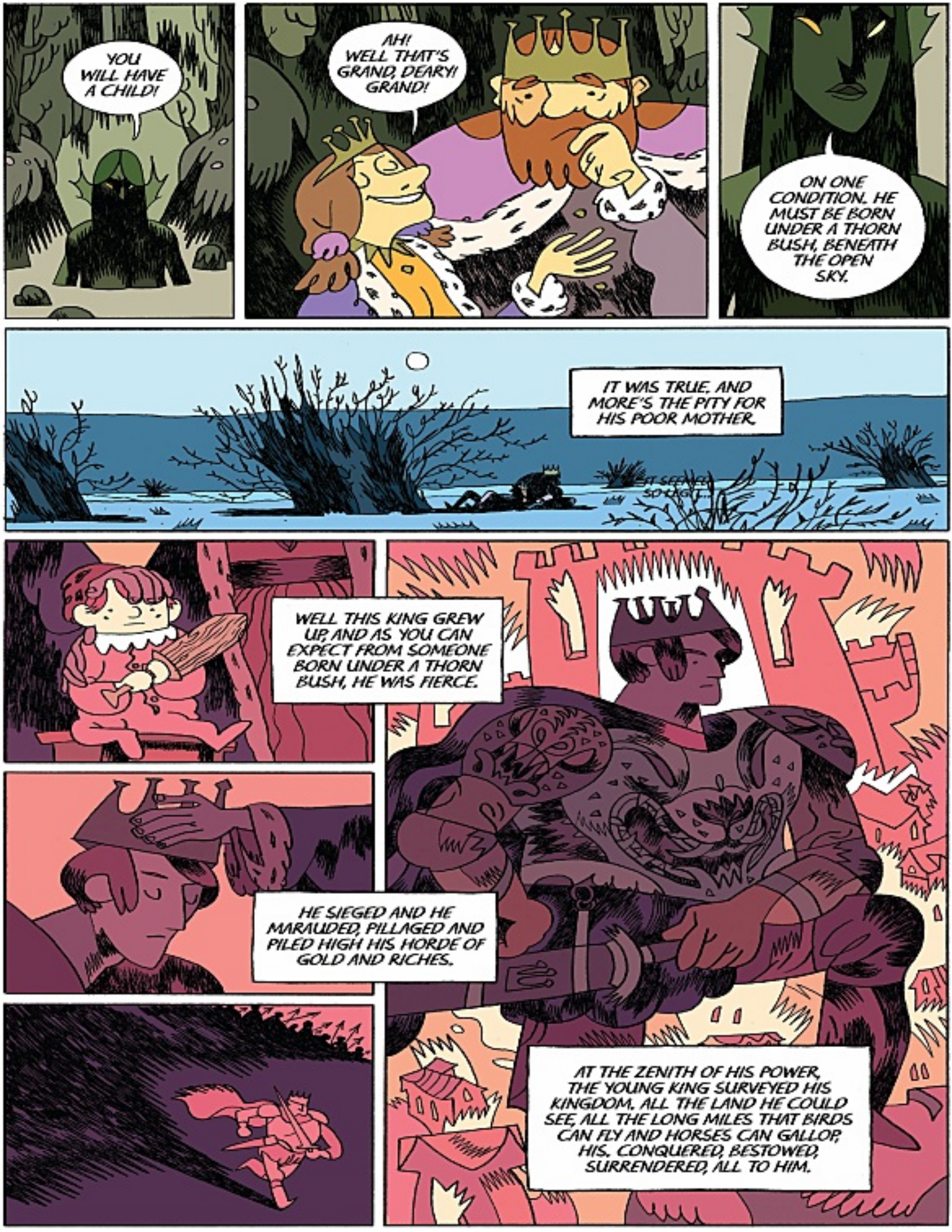
I'VE SEEN THIS MOON BEFORE!
SO HAVE I. LAST NIGHT, AND THE NIGHT BEFORE!
NO, NO. I KNOW MY MOONS AND THIS ONE IS SPECIAL.
MANY YEARS AGO, IN A LAND FAR FROM HERE, UNDER A MOON EXACTLY LIKE THIS ONE, A KING WAS BORN.
AND WHAT A FAIRYTALE KING HE WAS! HIS BIRTH BEING PREDICTED BY A MERMAID!
GO ON!

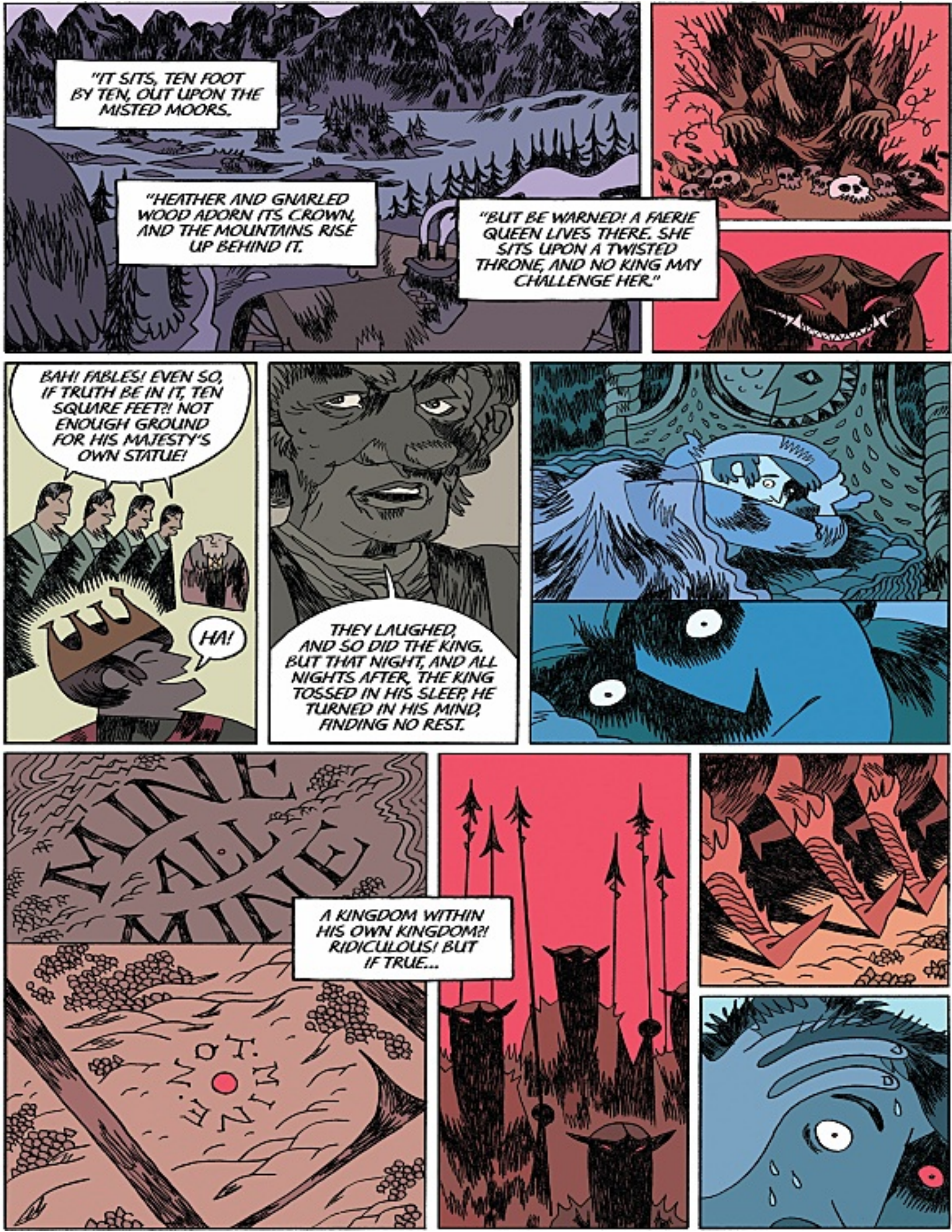

YOU WILL HAVE A CHILD!
AH! WELL THAT'S GRAND, DEARY! GRAND!
ON ONE CONDITION. HE MUST BE BORN UNDER A THORN BUSH, BENEATH THE OPEN SKY.
IT WAS TRUE. AND MORE'S THE PITY FOR HIS POOR MOTHER.
WELL THIS KING GREW UP, AND AS YOU CAN EXPECT FROM SOMEONE BORN UNDER A THORN BUSH, HE WAS FIERCE.
HE SIEGED AND HE MARAUDED, PILLAGED AND PILED HIGH HIS HORDE OF GOLD AND RICHES.
AT THE ZENITH OF HIS POWER, THE YOUNG KING SURVEYED HIS KINGDOM. ALL THE LAND HE COULD SEE, ALL THE LONG MILES THAT BIRDS CAN FLY AND HORSES CAN GALLOP, HIS. CONQUERED, BESTOWED, SURRENDERED, ALL TO HIM.

AND WHAT NOW? WHAT NOW ?!
WHAT CAN A KING DO WHEN ALL IS HIS? NOTHING LEFT TO CONQUER?
ADVISE ME, WISE-MEN.
REBELLION WITHIN YOUR STREETS! LED BY THAT HOOLIGAN NAT.
ALREADY QUELLED.
SHALL I SET SAIL? FIND ATLANTIS TO CONQUER?
A FABLE! THAT'S ATLANTIS FOR YOU! NOTHING BUT FABLE.

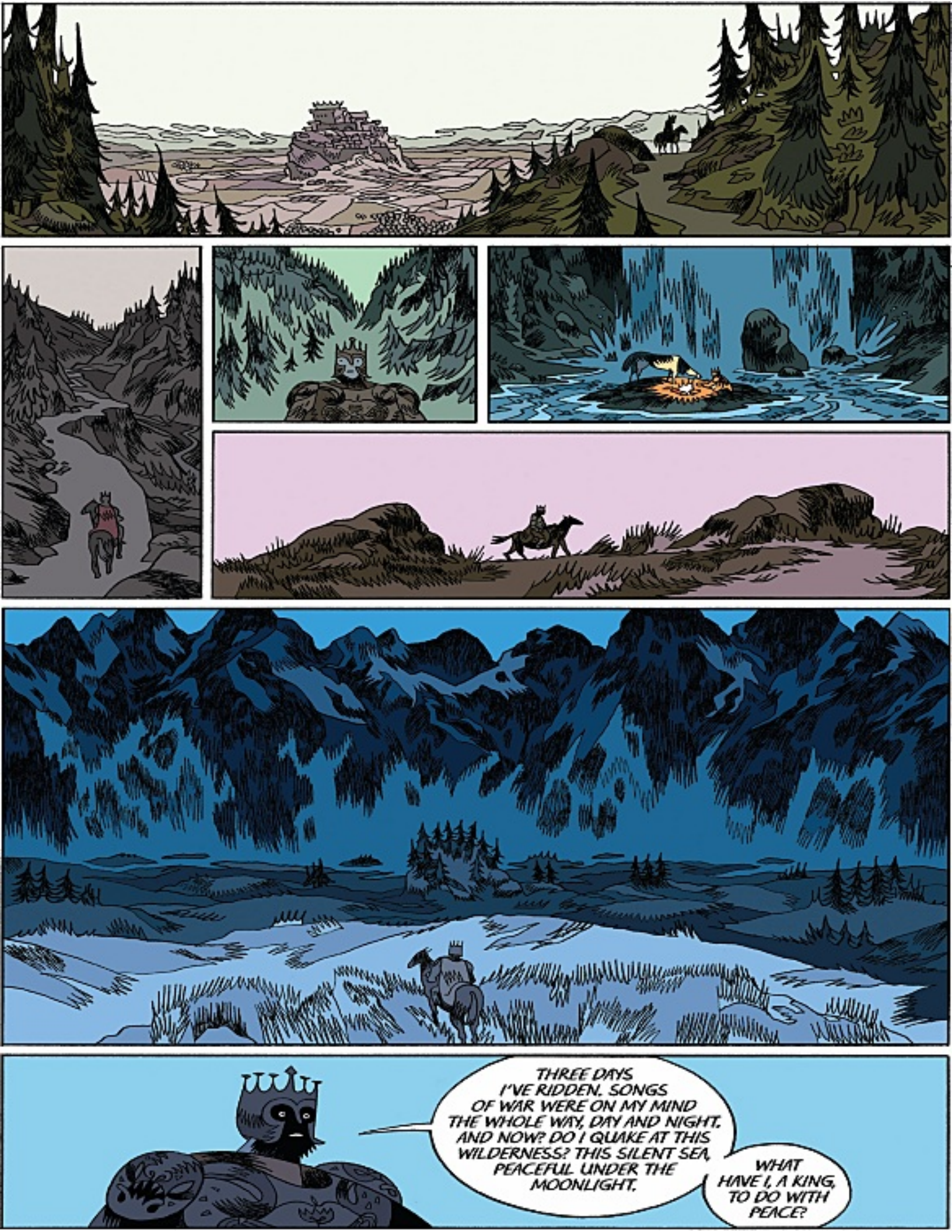
FAERIE HILL! THAT'S WHAT OUR KING WANTS, YES, HE DOES. FAERIE HILL.

BAH! AS MUCH FABLE AS ATLANTIS!

I MAKE NO JEST!
I SEEN IT, YOUR HIGHNESS! I BEEN THERE.
IT'S A SMALL PLOT OF LAND. UP PAST MARIGOLD'S OLD FARM ON THE EDGE OF THE KINGDOM.


"IT SITS, TEN FOOT BY TEN, OUT UPON THE MISTED MOORS.
"HEATHER AND GNARLED WOOD ADORN ITS CROWN, AND THE MOUNTAINS RISE UP BEHIND IT.
"BUT BE WARNED! A FAERIE QUEEN LIVES THERE. SHE SITS UPON A TWISTED THRONE, AND NO KING MAY CHALLENGE HER."
BAH! FABLES! EVEN SO, IF TRUTH BE IN IT, TEN SQUARE FEET?! NOT ENOUGH GROUND FOR HIS MAJESTY'S OWN STATUE!
HA!
THEY LAUGHED, AND SO DID THE KING. BUT THAT NIGHT, AND ALL NIGHTS AFTER, THE KING TOSSED IN HIS SLEEP, HE TURNED IN HIS MIND, FINDING NO REST.
MINE ALL MINE
A KINGDOM WITHIN HIS OWN KINGDOM?! RIDICULOUS! BUT IF TRUE...

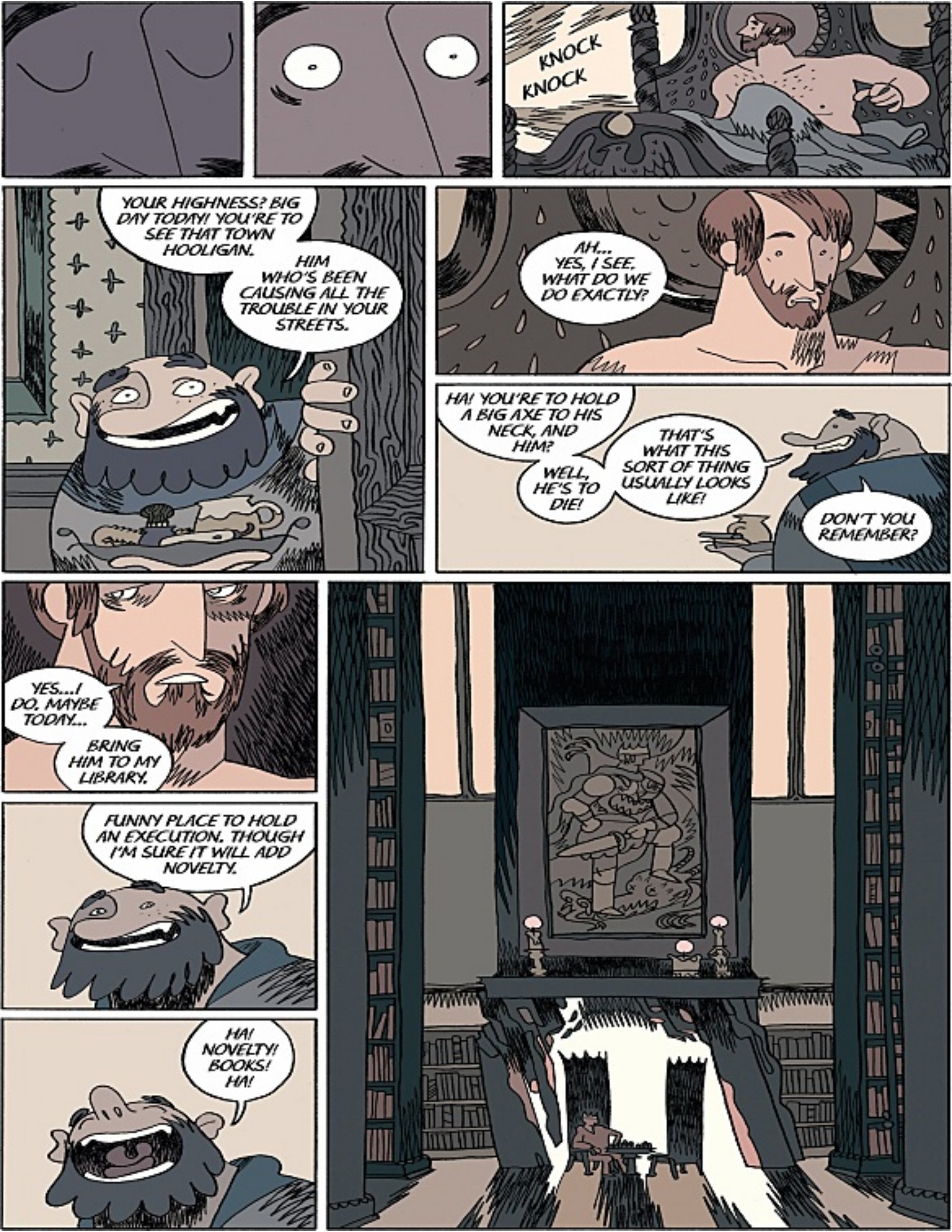
IT COULDN'T BE BORN. HE MUST FIND OUT.

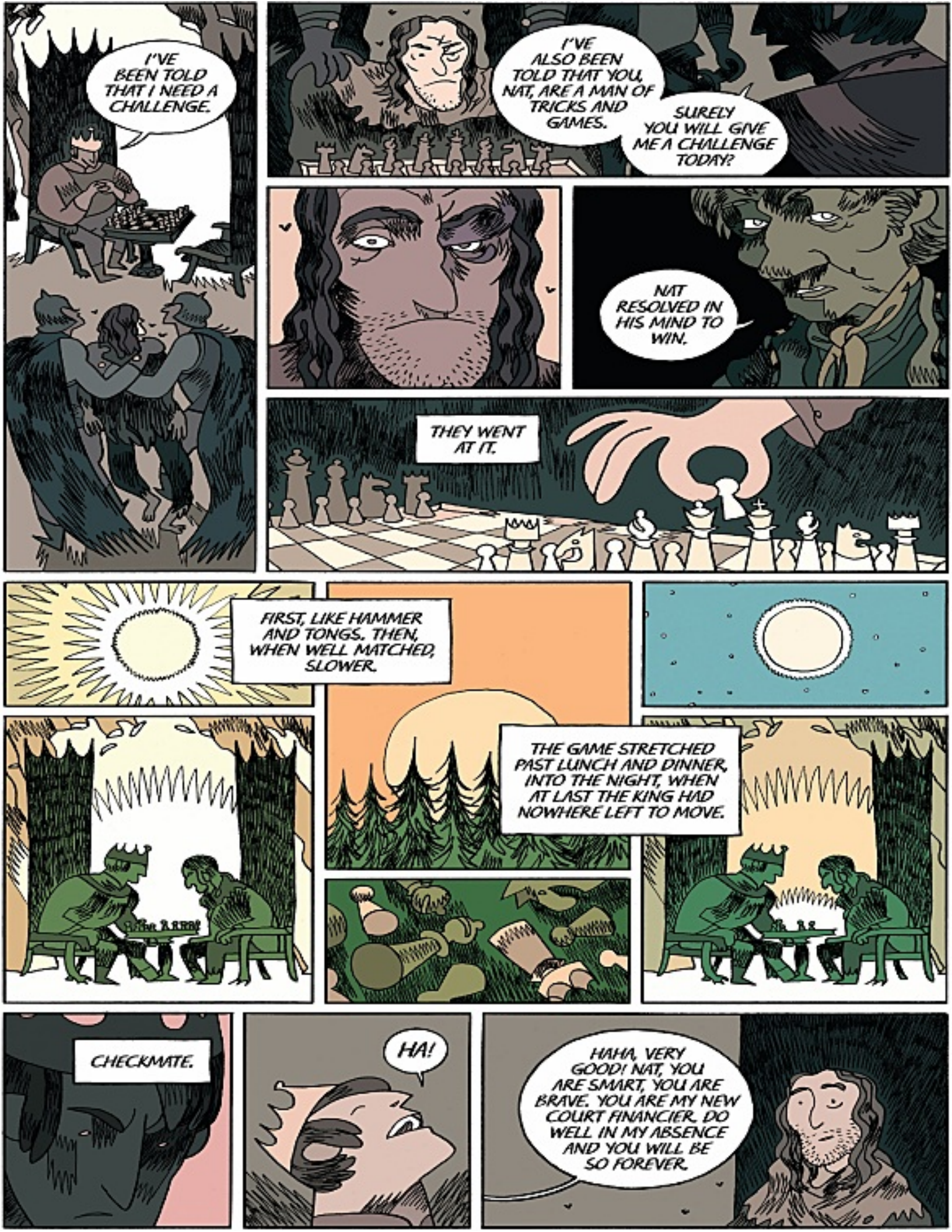

THREE DAYS I'VE RIDDEN. SONGS OF WAR WERE ON MY MIND THE WHOLE WAY, DAY AND NIGHT. AND NOW? DO I QUAKE AT THIS WILDERNESS? THIS SILENT SEA, PEACEFUL UNDER THE MOONLIGHT.
WHAT HAVE I, A KING, TO DO WITH PEACE?

MY SWORD IS RESTLESS BUT HAS NO BLOOD TO DRINK. AM I ITS DRAUGHT TONIGHT? DID I USE IT TO CONQUER A THOUSAND KINGDOMS? OR DID IT USE ME? IT'S CERTAINLY LEFT ME WITH NOTHING...
HE LOOKED DOWN AT THE HUNGRY BLADE.
NAKED IN THE MOONLIGHT.
AND THEN--I
A BELL!
SOFT.
A WIND,
STRONG.
A DOOR,
NARROW.
A STAIR,
BLACK.

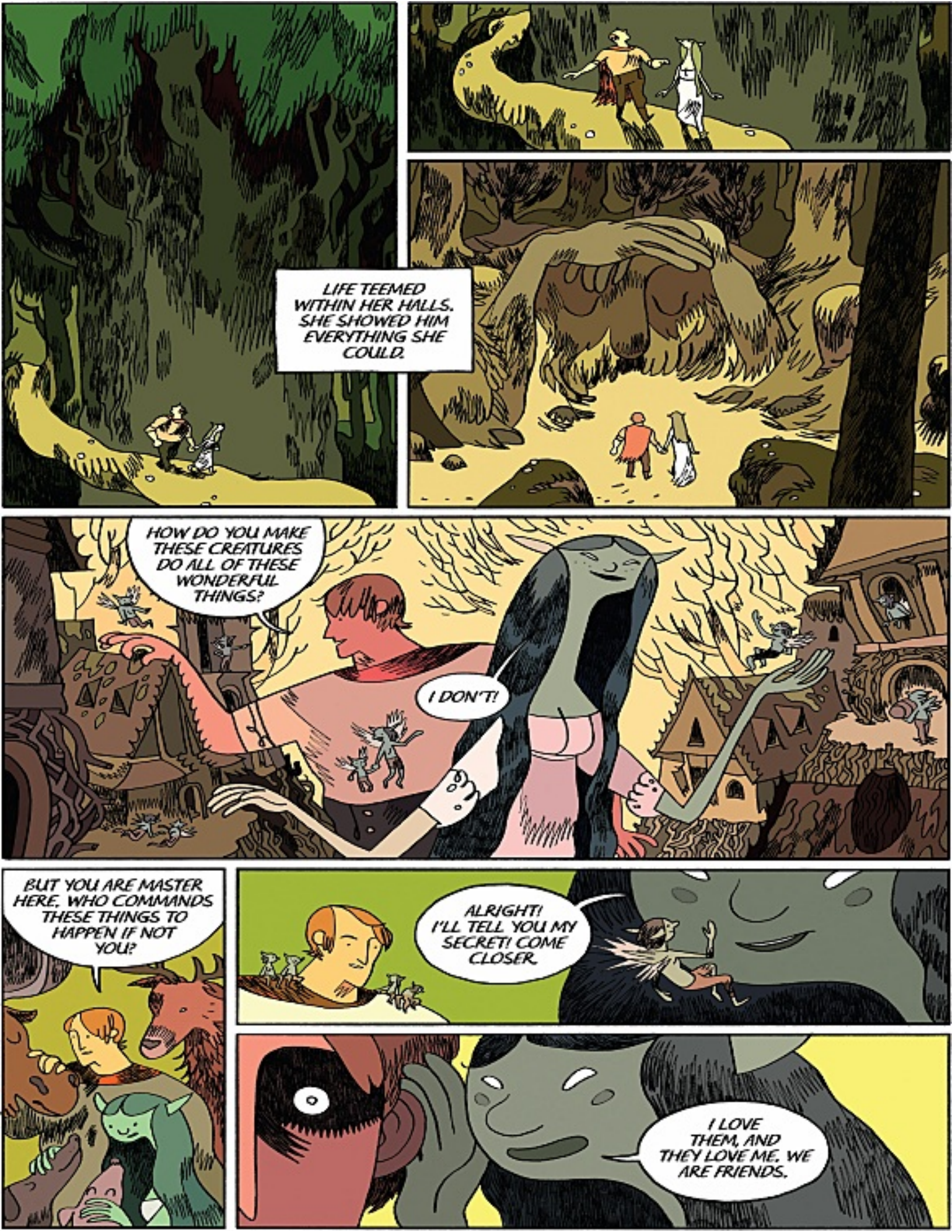
WHAT DOES A KING OF MAN WANT HERE IN FAERIE?

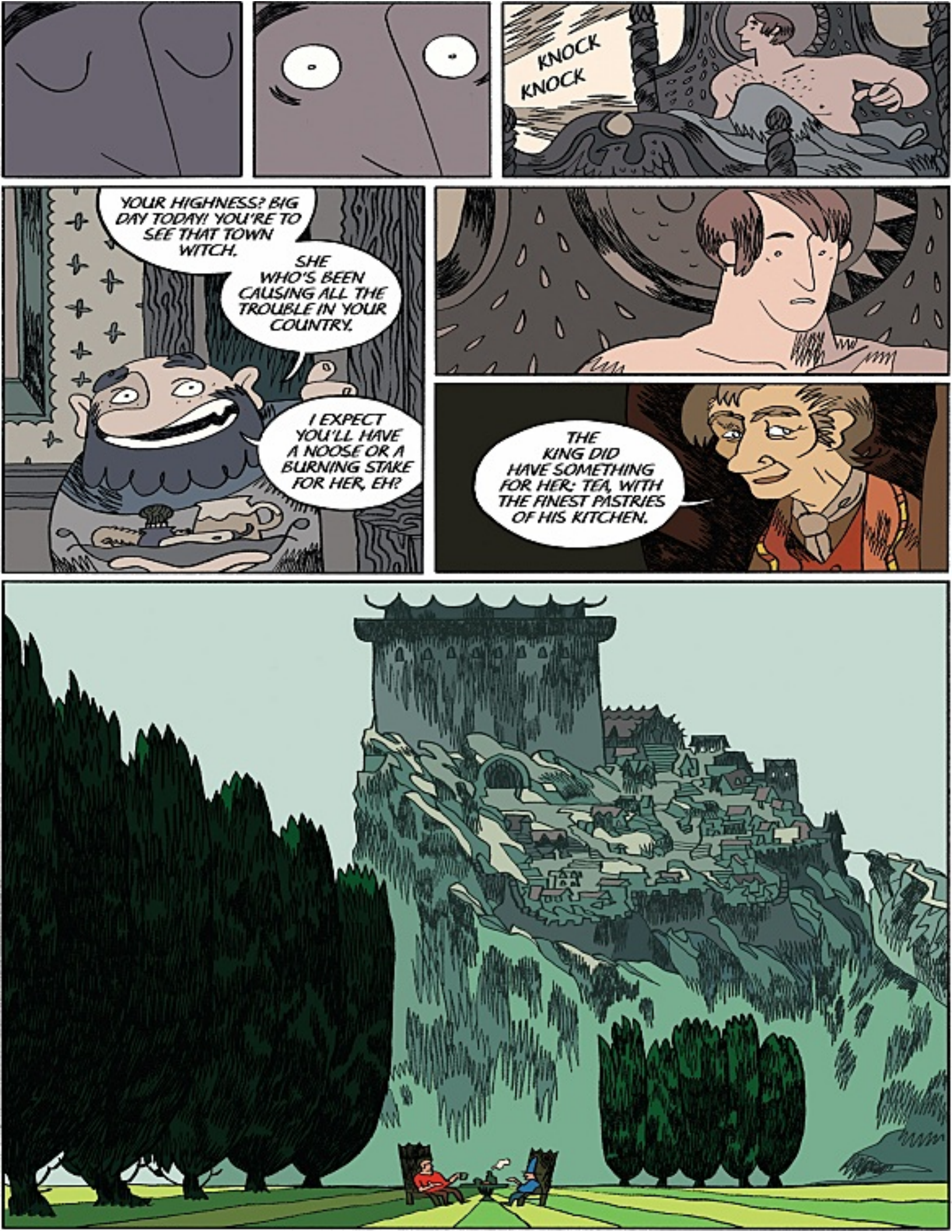
I WANT... I DEMAND THIS LAND. I COME TO CONQUER ...
HE DIDN'T SAY THAT!
OH YES HE DID! BOLD AS BRASS, RIGHT TO THE QUEEN'S FACE.
HE SAID IT, BUT NOT WITH CONVICTION AS YOU MIGHT SUPPOSE. HE SAID IT AS GROWN UP PEOPLE SAY THINGS THEY THINK THEY OUGHT, BUT KNOW THEY DON'T REALLY BELIEVE.
HALF - HEARTED. THAT'S THE WORD FOR IT, AND NO MISTAKE.
CONQUEST YOU SAY? I SAY, YOU SEEK A CHALLENGE. I SAY DEEP IN YOUR HEART, YOU HOPE AGAINST HOPE THAT THERE IS SOME POWER IN THIS WORLD TO MATCH YOU.
KILL ME, TAKE MY KINGDOM, RULE MY LAND, THEN WHAT? THE SWORD? YOUR SWORD IS HUNGRY, IT CARES NOT WHOM IT DEVOURS. BEWARE IT.
I... AM KING. I WIELD IT. I AM ITS MASTER.
YOU SIT ON THRONES, ON ANIMALS. YOU STEP ON PEOPLE, ON SOIL. BUT YOU ARE NO MASTER.
THE MORE YOU RULE THE LESS YOU KNOW.
AS YOUR BODY GROWS, YOUR MIND IS ECLIPSED.
IT SHRINKS WITHIN AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL ONE DAY YOU WILL BE GONE, ENVELOPED IN YOUR OWN KINGDOM.
YOUR KINGDOM OF NOTHING. NO MOURNERS' CRIES WILL SOUND AT YOUR PASSING. NO SONGS OF LAMENT WILL FOLLOW YOUR CASKET.
UNLESS... YOU RISE TO THE CHALLENGE.
THEN CHALLENGE ME!
I HAVE. AWAKE, THINK. COME BACK TO ME ON THE FOURTH DAY.


KNOCK KNOCK
YOUR HIGHNESS? BIG DAY TODAY! YOU'RE TO SEE THAT TOWN HOOLIGAN.
HIM WHO'S BEEN CAUSING ALL THE TROUBLE IN YOUR STREETS.
AH... YES, I SEE. WHAT DO WE DO EXACTLY?
HA! YOU'RE TO HOLD A BIG AXE TO HIS NECK, AND HIM?
WELL, HE'S TO DIE!
THAT'S WHAT THIS SORT OF THING USUALLY LOOKS LIKE!
DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
YES...I DO. MAYBE TODAY...
BRING HIM TO MY LIBRARY.
FUNNY PLACE TO HOLD AN EXECUTION. THOUGH I'M SURE IT WILL ADD NOVELTY.
HA! NOVELTY! BOOKS! HA!

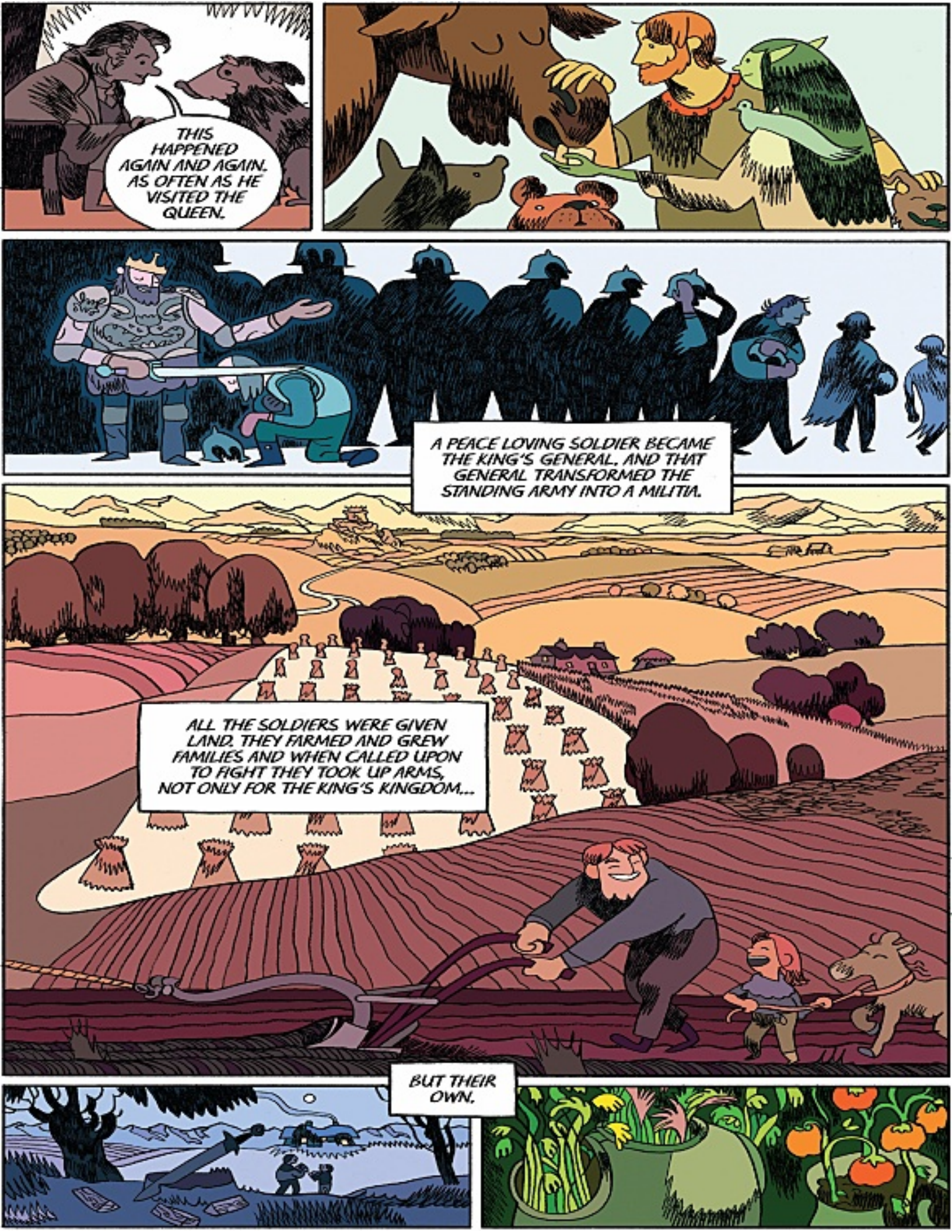

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT I NEED A CHALLENGE.
I'VE ALSO BEEN TOLD THAT YOU, NAT, ARE A MAN OF TRICKS AND GAMES.
SURELY YOU WILL GIVE ME A CHALLENGE TODAY?
NAT RESOLVED IN HIS MIND TO WIN.
THEY WENT AT IT.
FIRST, LIKE HAMMER AND TONGS. THEN, WHEN WELL MATCHED, SLOWER.
THE GAME STRETCHED PAST LUNCH AND DINNER, INTO THE NIGHT, WHEN AT LAST THE KING HAD NOWHERE LEFT TO MOVE.
CHECKMATE.
HA!
HAHA, VERY GOOD! NAT, YOU ARE SMART, YOU ARE BRAVE. YOU ARE MY NEW COURT FINANCIER. DO WELL IN MY ABSENCE AND YOU WILL BE SO FOREVER.

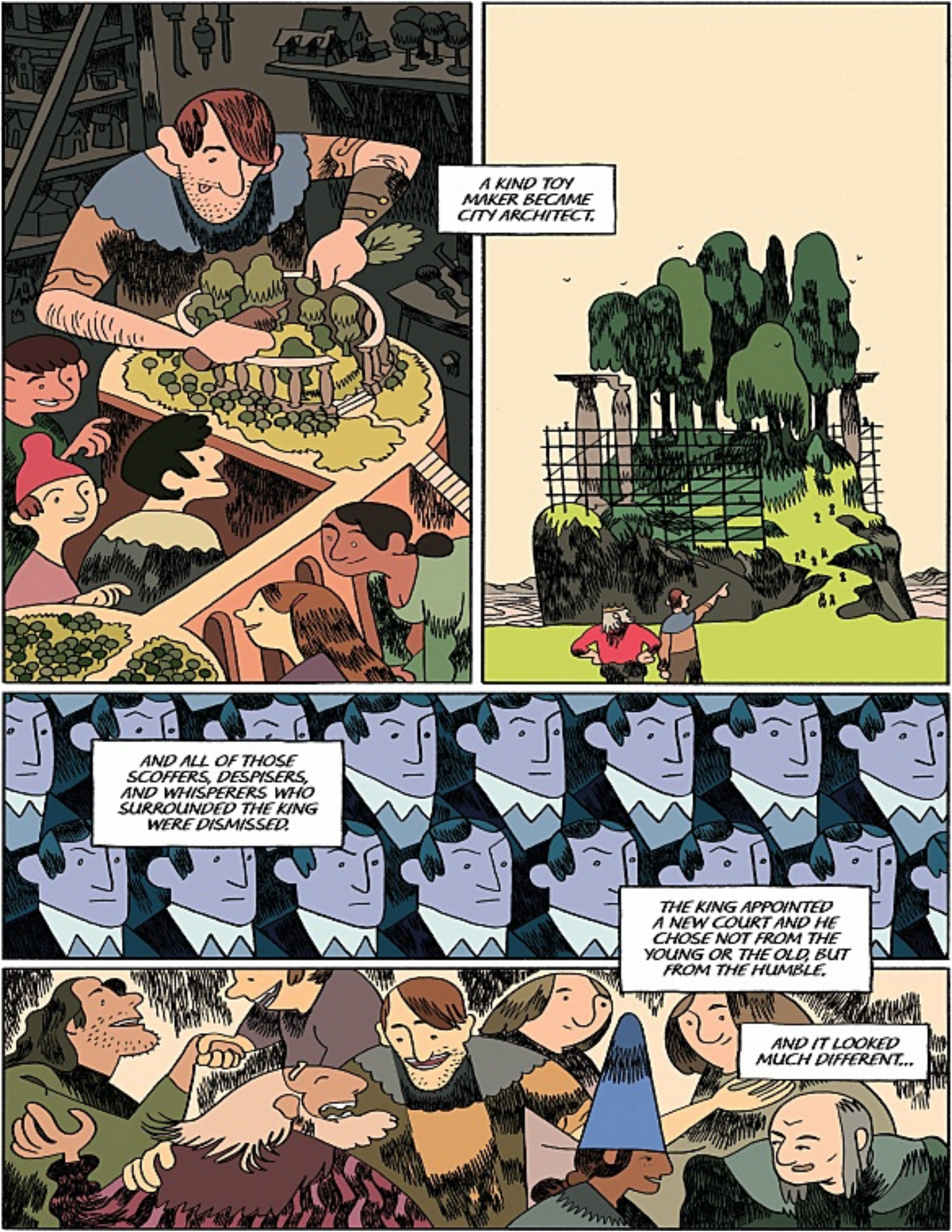
WITH THE CLOSE OF THAT DAY AND THE START OF ANOTHER, HE WAS OFF AGAIN TO FAERIE HILL.
THE KING SHARED EVERYTHING WITH THE QUEEN. THE CHESS MATCH, HIS LOSING AND LAUGHTER INSTEAD OF ANGER.
SHE LAUGHED IN TURN.
AND IT SEEMED TO THE KING THAT IF THE WHOLE WORLD BROKE IN HALF, RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE, ALL IT WOULD TAKE TO MEND WOULD BE ONE LAUGH FROM THAT FAERIE QUEEN.


LIFE TEEMED WITHIN HER HALLS. SHE SHOWED HIM EVERYTHING SHE COULD.
HOW DO YOU MAKE THESE CREATURES DO ALL OF THESE WONDERFUL THINGS?
I DON'T!
BUT YOU ARE MASTER HERE. WHO COMMANDS THESE THINGS TO HAPPEN IF NOT YOU?
ALRIGHT! I'LL TELL YOU MY SECRET! COME CLOSER.
I LOVE THEM, AND THEY LOVE ME. WE ARE FRIENDS.


KNOCK KNOCK
YOUR HIGHNESS? BIG DAY TODAY! YOU'RE TO SEE THAT TOWN WITCH.
SHE WHO'S BEEN CAUSING ALL THE TROUBLE IN YOUR COUNTRY.
I EXPECT YOU'LL HAVE A NOOSE OR A BURNING STAKE FOR HER, EH?
THE KING DID HAVE SOMETHING FOR HER: TEA, WITH THE FINEST PASTRIES OF HIS KITCHEN.

HE FOUND THAT SOME OF THE TALK OF HER SPELL WORK WAS TRUE. SHE REALLY COULD MAKE MEDICINE OUT OF PLANTS, HERBS, AND DRIED ANIMAL BONES.
BUT HE ALSO FOUND THAT THE TALK OF HER CHANGING LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS INTO THOSE ANIMALS WAS FALSE.
HAHA! VERY GOOD! YOU ARE SMART, YOU ARE BRAVE. PLEASE, BE MY NEW COURT DOCTOR. DO WELL IN MY ABSENCE AND YOU WILL BE SO FOREVER.
SHE AGREED. AND THEY SHOOK ON IT.


THIS HAPPENED AGAIN AND AGAIN. AS OFTEN AS HE VISITED THE QUEEN.
A PEACE LOVING SOLDIER BECAME THE KING'S GENERAL. AND THAT GENERAL TRANSFORMED THE STANDING ARMY INTO A MILITIA.
ALL THE SOLDIERS WERE GIVEN LAND. THEY FARMED AND GREW FAMILIES AND WHEN CALLED UPON TO FIGHT THEY TOOK UP ARMS, NOT ONLY FOR THE KING'S KINGDOM...
BUT THEIR OWN.


A KIND TOY MAKER BECAME CITY ARCHITECT.
AND ALL OF THOSE SCOFFERS, DESPISERS, AND WHISPERERS WHO SURROUNDED THE KING WERE DISMISSED.
THE KING APPOINTED A NEW COURT AND HE CHOSE NOT FROM THE YOUNG OR THE OLD, BUT FROM THE HUMBLE.
AND IT LOOKED MUCH DIFFERENT...

...AND SO DID HIS KINGDOM. MUCH DIFFERENT.
THE KING WAS CALLED MAD AT FIRST.

HE WAS CALLED MAD AT SECOND.
AND THIRDLY, HE WAS CALLED MAD.
MAD, MAD, MAD!
AND MAD HE WAS! MADLY IN LOVE WITH PEACE, WITH CHARITY, WITH LOVE ITSELF.
HIS FEET WALKED IN FAERIE, AND FAERIE DANCED IN HIS HEART. 'TIL HIS DYING DAY.

AND ON THAT DAY, THE TWO WORLDS CAME TOGETHER. AND THERE WAS SADNESS, AND THERE WAS LAUGHTER.

YOU SEE, A HARD HEART HADN'T BEEN MADE SOFT BUT STRONG, PLIABLE TO REASON. LOVE POURED INTO IT SO LOVE COULD POUR OUT IN TURN.
ONE LIFE HAD BEEN LOST IN THAT FAERIE HILL, AND IN THE DYING THERE WAS REBIRTH. A KING GAVE HIS LIFE TO HIS PEOPLE AND HE GAINED TRUE LIFE IN THE END.
UNDER THAT HILL OUT UPON THE MOORS, UNDER THE MOON AND THE MOUNTAINS, ADORNED WITH HEATHER.

HIS BODY IS GONE NOW. THIS POOR REFLECT-ION REMAINS. BUT THE LOVE SOWN IN HIS SOUL WAS CONTAGEOUS AND IT GREW OUT OF THE GROUND HE WAS PLANTED IN.
THE END.

BOOM! STUDIOS

# DISCOVER YOURS

## JANUARY RELEASES AND NEWS

EVIL THRIVES WHERE TRUTH HIDES
**ABBOTT**

THE RISE OF A VILLAIN
**PLANET OF THE APES: URSUS**

ICYMI: LUMBERJANES
**TRACK A JACKALOPE**

ALSO THIS MONTH
**GET TO KNOW BOOM! STUDIOS**
**BOOM! BOX MIX TAPE**

TO **READ THESE STORIES** AND **DISCOVER MORE NEWS AND UPDATES** FOLLOW US

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# EVIL THRIVES WHERE TRUTH HIDES
# ABBOTT

Hugo Award-nominated novelist Saladin Ahmed *(Black Bolt)* and artist Sami Kivelä *(Beautiful Canvas)* present one woman's search for the truth that destroyed her family. Hard-nosed, chain-smoking tabloid reporter Elena Abbott investigates a series of grisly crimes that the police have ignored. Crimes she knows to be the work of dark occult forces. Forces that took her husband from her. Forces she has sworn to destroy.

**Saladin Ahmed**
Writer

**What was your inspiration for *Abbott*?**

I've always loved the trope of the dogged investigator who uncovers a glimpse of the occult. It's a familiar story in genre, but *Abbott* was really inspired by an attempt to put a different sort of hero and setting at the center of such a story. *Abbott* is solidly in the tradition of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, *Hellblazer*, and *The X-Files*, but its hero and her milieu bring something new to the tradition.

**Tell us a little about Elena Abbott and what she's up against.**

Elena—or "Abbott" as she's known to her co-workers—is a driven, chain-smoking tabloid reporter with an uncompromising eye for the truth. The only black reporter at the *Detroit Daily News*, she's an investigative genius. But she's haunted by the murder of her husband at the hands of occult forces. In the years since his death, she's hidden herself in a haze of work and cigarette smoke. And then the bodies—murdered in the same fashion as her husband—start showing up.

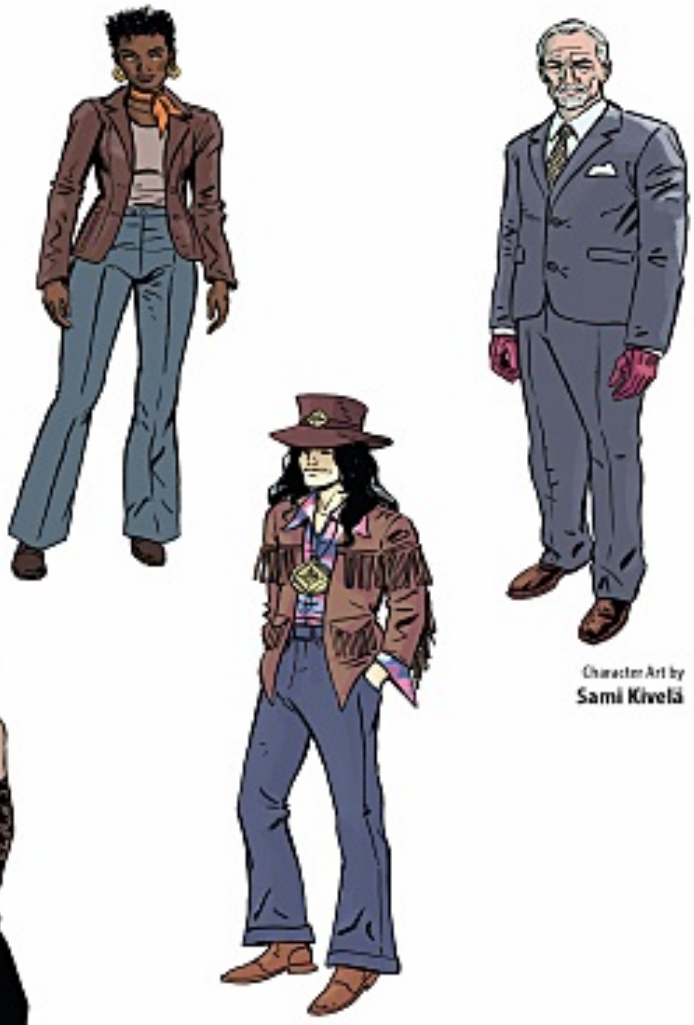
Issue One Cover
**Taj Tenfold**

***Abbott* is set in Detroit in 1972. What made you choose this time and location for the series?**

The cars! The clothes! The music! More seriously, Detroit in the '70s was a time of astonishing political and cultural change. Famously, it was a time of white flight from the city to the suburbs. But it was also a remarkable time of black renaissance and self-determination. It's the perfect setting for Abbott's tale of social conflict and shadowy magic.

**What do you hope readers take away from this series?**

Kick*** heroine! Old-school late-night TV horror chills! Snappy dialogue! Crime and magic! Newspapers and monsters! If horror or crime or history or social drama is your thing, there will be something here for you to love. ■



Character Art by
**Sami Kivelä**

**ABBOTT #1**
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL COMIC SHOP
**JANUARY 24!**

# WWE

## NEW STORIES FROM SUPERSTARS
## AJ STYLES & SAMOA JOE

Every January, Royal Rumble takes the world by storm in a battle royale free-for-all in one of WWE's most celebrated annual events. From Ric Flair winning his first rumble to Shawn Michaels going the distance after teetering on the edge, we're packing this special with the greatest hits throughout Royal Rumble history. Featuring "The Debut of AJ Styles," written by WWE Superstar AJ Styles and Michael Kingston (*Headlocked*)!

WWE Royal Rumble 2018 Special Cover by
**Xermánico**

"...MY MOST **PHENOMENAL DEBUT** WAS IN FRONT OF THE WWE UNIVERSE—READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE ***WWE ROYAL RUMBLE 2018 SPECIAL***."

—**AJ STYLES**

**WWE ROYAL RUMBLE 2018 SPECIAL**
IS IN COMIC SHOPS **JANUARY 10!**

WWE #13 Cover by
**Dan Mora**

Celebrate WWE Monday Night Raw with stories from every era of the flagship show in sports entertainment history, including a story co-written by WWE Superstar Samoa Joe on how he joined the WWE Raw Roster!

"AS A LIFELONG COMIC BOOK FAN, IT'S A THRILL TO... TELL **THE TRUE STORY** BEHIND MY JOURNEY TO WWE."

—**SAMOA JOE**

**WWE #13**
IS IN COMIC SHOPS **JANUARY 17!**

Cover Art by
**Paolo Rivera**

## THE RISE OF A VILLAIN
# PLANET OF THE APES: URSUS

David F. Walker *(Luke Cage)* returns to the Planet of the Apes with artist Christopher Mooneyham *(Five Ghosts)* for a limited series about the franchise's most notorious villain! General Ursus has always hated and feared mankind. Get a glimpse at his rise through the ranks to General and what experiences brought him to the Forbidden Zone.

**PLANET OF THE APES: URSUS #1**
IS IN COMIC SHOPS **JANUARY 3!**

ICYMI: LUMBERJANES

# TRACK A JACKALOPE

After everything that's happened at camp, the Roanokes are in need of something to cheer them up. Luckily, Jen has the perfect thing: a search for a jackalope! Along the way, the Roanokes meet Emmy, a roaming cowgirl, and her herd of critters and cryptids.

**LUMBERJANES #46**
IS IN COMIC SHOPS **JANUARY 24!**

Cover Art by
**Kat Leyh**

YOUR NEW FAVORITE PLAYLIST:

# BOOM! BOX MIX TAPE

For years, we put together an eclectic collection of stories featuring beloved characters from established BOOM! Box series like *Lumberjanes*, *Giant Days*, and *The Backstagers*, as well as original stories showcasing up-and-coming creators and brand-new content.The *BOOM! Box Mix Tape* encapsulates the "comics made for the love of it" spirit, and we're happy to have the first softcover collection (containing the 2014-2016 Mix Tapes) available for everyone to enjoy!

**BOOM! BOX MIX TAPE SC**
IS IN COMIC SHOPS **JANUARY 3!**

## GET TO KNOW **BOOM! STUDIOS**

# MATTHEW LEVINE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**Currently Watching:** The *Child's Play* franchise.

**Movie I Can Quote By Heart:** *Back to the Future.*

**Currently Reading:** *Songs of Kali* by Dan Simmons.

**Food I'd Wrestle A Bear For:** A pastrami sandwich from Langer's Deli.

**Favorite Travel Destination:** New Orleans, LA.

**Secret talent:** Horseback riding.

**Hometown:** Los Angeles, CA.